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The Marriage of the Dawn

AN IDYL OF EDEN
AND OTHER VERSES

R. M. DOWNIE

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The Marriage of the Dawn

AN IDYL OF EDEN

AND

OTHER VERSE

BY

R. M. DOWNIE

BEAVER FALLS, PA.

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PROEM

In this nether world of chronic gloom,
Where each path presumes at last a tomb,
Where all pleasures, though like summer clouds,
Soon dissolve in tears or turn to shrouds,
There be upland vistas here and there
Which beguile away, for moments rare,
To enchanted mountain peaks that gleam
With the radiance of joy supreme.

And, forgetting the forbidding past
As an evil spell dispelled at last,
Like a pris'ner from his dungeon free,
Or a bird uncaged to liberty,
The enraptured spirit steals away
To its native realms of cloudless day,
And as though to Paradise reborn
Breathes afresh the fragrance of its morn.

Though these heights may be of earth below,
And are cloaked with mists or cap'd with snow
Lest the dazzling brightness glowing there
But consume or blind those who it dare,
In their warmth we may redream the time
Ere the race had dipt its wings in slime
And let fancy ply untrammeled flight
O'er the lost domains of pure delight.

For a longing which outbounds Despair,
That is quenchless as a midnight star,
That of even every pain endured
Makes a prophet of a heaven restored,

Finds among the ruins of the Fall
And an Eden wrecked beyond recall
The impledgments that a happier one
Will arise where fell that which is gone.

For a beacon burns beyond the stars
Which was kindled there for all God's years
That no accidents of time can wrench
From its pedestal, nor evil quench;
And above all moiling of all floods,
Like a light enlatticed in the clouds,
A Shekinah beckons through the night
From the cloudless Dwelling Place of Light.

And as phantom ships like wraiths arise
Through the flotsam where their wreckage lies,
And their destined haven still betray
By the course their intuitions lay,
So among the yearnings of the race,
Voicing hopes which nothing can efface,
We may catch some echoes from that shore
Where no sea nor sin can trouble more.

Thus in diorama we may rear
From the traces left both there and here
Some recrudence of yon halcyon
Where the heart of God and Man were one;
Some previstas of that Harbor-home
To the which at last all joys shall come,
Some forewistings of those realms above
Where the theme of every thought is love.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE DAWN

Part 1

ADAM'S SOLILOQUY

"Ah what is this whose comeliness contests my path
As if to blind as well as bind me with its charms?
Some new-made toy, or luring joy set here, I ween,
To win my thoughts once more from these my empty arms.

"In pink and gold it would me hold a fettered thrall
While breathing forth its toxic fragrance on the air.
Ah, would that He who fashioned me had not forgot
To make for me, instead of this, a mate as fair.

"This flower is wondrous fair and from its petaled heart
It speaks to me of chastity of lip and touch,
Yet these but fire a wild desire it cannot slake,—
And must my spirit always stoop to only such?

"And though from off its lips the limpid sunlight drips,
By Beauty's mystic alchemy transfused to gold,
Yet in my soul this burning coal and quenchless fire
Makes yonder sun its very self seem icy cold.

"Of other sentient things He formed two of a kind,
That complement of each might in a mate be found;
But I am left of kin bereft,—save but Himself,
—Perhaps that we the closer be together bound.

"But let me flee this reverie, for it but lures
My thoughts to yonder tree and its forbidden fruit.
How strange that when I question forth they seem to rise
Ubiquitous to warn my will from its pursuit.

"How strange must be the taste of what untasted tempts!
Makes wise to good and evil both, impartially;
And stranger still that good and ill should thus arise
From out the selfsame source of soil and sap and tree!

"But what is evil, and from whence does it proceed?
In what way differs it from good in kind or sign?
Does it pertain to things, a quality that clings
To trees, or beasts,—or only to a soul like mine?

"And what is good? Why is it good? What makes it so?
Is it of evil but resulting counterpart?
Can it in trees inhere, in that they are or bear?
Or is it also only said of soul and heart?

"And why should such a tree be found within these gates?
Is there no good apart from evil, as its foil?
Is each of these innate; or do they but create,
Each light its shade? each good its mead of ill or toil?

"Must ev'ry joy be wrought from pain of equal weight?
Is death but life obversed; a name for endless sleep?
Do love and hate but correlate as hemispheres?
Does every zenith have its nadir just as deep?

"Am I the differentiation of their sums?
My soul the field whereon their fight is won or lost?
Between all good and all that would with good contend,
—A chip upon the tide by their contentions tost?

"Oh God, I know not nor would ask aught but Thy will,
Yet I seem launched between eternal enmities,
—Myself the neutral field of war 'twixt good and ill,
—Though knowing neither, yet of both the final prize.

"I've questioned near, I've wandered far, Thy plan to learn;
And while I trust the love behind yon threatened curse,
Must there not be somewhere a One more fit than I
To solve the paradoxes of this universe?

"—Some One at once divine, and yet of human kin,
With power to love or not at will a man or moth,
—So lowly as to want the touch of hands like mine,
—A finite yet an Infinite, with heart of both?

"In yon bright sky so pure and high I see impledged
A better place and holier than Eden, even,
With no such baleful tree or its antipathy
To lure from thence to hell, or fence the path to heaven.

"Perhaps when thy great final Plan stands forth complete
These seeming contradictions will articulate
A Cosmos so celestial, a Garden walled so well
That sin and evil cannot mate within its gate.

"Mayhap thy handiwork is not as yet complete;
—May lack its heart, its counterpart, its synthesis:
Or may it be that all this vast complexity
Is but a school to teach the soul love's genesis?

"Hast Thou not one, one other boon awaiting yet?
A last or best to crown the rest in matchlessness?
But how? or what? If Thou wert not Omnipotence
I might not thus suspect, might not the query press.

"But is it good that thus I brood upon my lack?
Shall I not rather trust Thy wise and loving care?

If so, Thy will be done! My burning thirst
begone!
But oh, my God, companionship! Oh God, my
prayer."

* * * * * * *

And thus mused he whom God in His own image
made,
As in the Garden leisurely alone he strolled,
Or with his Great Creator walked and talked
of what
The unblown flowers of Eden's bowers might yet
unfold.

And wand'ring far afield he sought a couch and
sleep
Upon the velvet moss by Gihon's placid stream,—
The while the setting sun made of the western sky
A gorgeous portal whence might come some an-
swering dream.

* * * * * * *

Now far and wide a perfect world to stillness
falls,
And for its vesper benediction turns aloft its face,
While God's good will, which all may feel but
fathom none,
Lulls every creature of the day to perfect peace.

Lest ill betide that which was made so good and
fair
The stars their sentry keep in far-flung serried
ranks,

And all the sleeping world resigns to Him its will,
Save only he who dreams his plea on Gihon's
banks.

Across his face the shadow of a shadow flits,
As if some albatross, home winging from her quest,
Had cleft unconsciously a starbeam in her flight,
Or shed toward his couch a feather from her
breast.

Or did the shadow but enshroud that Mystery
Which o'er all depths of sea and soul is brooding
still?
—Begetting there, unconscious of their prior
source,
Intuitive desires through which God works His
will?

Was there beside the placid tide of Eden's stream
An unforbidden tree of life whose toxic wine
Unconsciously begot a will to seek beyond
For some exceeding ultimate of joy divine?

Within the soul there is emplaced a dial true
Where half the truth is light, the other half its
shade,
Where Sorrow prints an added prophecy of Joy
Which Happiness alone can neither write nor read.

Oh Sleeper, sleep! and so forget this boon you
crave.
Such gift may be too nobly fair of soul and face;

A Havvah! and fit mother for a race of gods
—And yet not charm thy soul away from God's
embrace?

Yes, Sleeper, sleep! or wake to weep, if He but
grant
The half you wish. For with the gift you may
acquire
That knowledge which, to know, is but to question
why
The sun a shadow casts, or light is born of fire.

* * * * * * *

THE NATIVITY OF EVE

What retrospective eye may pierce the mists that
shroud
The crowning act of God's creative skill and
power?
When by a threefold matchless artistry He
wrought
The miracles of Motherhood, its Charm and
Dower?

A million miracles enwombed in one, and each
Alike the source perennial of millions more.
Not all the ages past nor æons yet to come
Can dim the glory of the deed that marked that
hour.

And what the setting meet for such supreme event?
Came all the perfect creatures that creation held,

At His behest, that all their best might be outdone?
—All Grace and Beauty, that their sum might be excelled?

What wonder if that host, twelve legions strong or more,
Which hovered o'er Gethsemane in after years,
And all the Shining Ones from farthest firmaments
Should hither bring on trembling wing their hopes and fears?

For here was born the parent of a Christ-to-be,
And mother of the mothers of a coming race,
The living chalice of that searchless mystery
Whereby the Son of God in flesh found fitting place.

Were those to whom the miracle of Motherhood
Was strange and new, on special summons there to greet
God's first-born daughter with angelic ministries?
—To swaddle with seraphic love the stranger sweet?

Were they perchance aware of yonder sleeper's prayer?
And came they with a joy that heaven's courts denied,
—With unseen hands to strew a bridal path with flowers
And ring from mystic bells a pæan for his bride?

Is there somewhere among the fonts of heav'nly
bliss
A spring at which no seraph may his craving
slake?
—Reserved for only those of closest kin to God?
—Those who the Sole Creator's closer image take?

Was there anigh the guileful eye of Jealousy
With all the sullen secrecy of hate and fraud?
Intent that he might have no rival for the heart
Of yonder guarded sleeper, yonder son of God?

Through pregnant stillness, fraught with mighty
destinies,
Like some tense cloud surcharged with bolts unlit,
unthrown,
The silent steps of God's preplanned event passed
by
And left new-born to greet the morn, a rival dawn.

* * * * * * *

Part 2

Eve's Awakening

"Now morn, her rosy steps in the eastern clime
Advancing, sow'd the earth with Orient pearl
When Adam wak'd, so custom'd: for his sleep
Was aery light, from pure digestion bred,—

—Hung over her enamor'd and beheld
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces."

—Milton.

"Awake! Awake? Am I awake?
Or do I only think in dreams?
Or from their phantasies provise
A consciousness that merely seems?

"Awake? From sleep? or nothingness?
Or are my lips but echoing
Some dream-caught word so faintly heard
It scarce disturbed my slumbering?

"Awake? Alone? Whom do I ask?
Of what may I expect reply?
—Some other chancing waif, like me?
—Some other dreamer dreaming by?

"How can I certify myself
That I do not of naught consist?

—Nor am the transient counterpart
Of yon attenuating mist?

"How much of all I seem to see
Is part of me, or of my dream?
—This moss-grown stone I rest upon,
—This tree, these flow'rs, this placid stream?

"Or are these things distinct from me,
—Firm fixities that do not move,
To which my fitful reason clings
Its own reality to prove?

"These hands! They move! Now thus, now so,
As though adventuring in quest
Of some uncertain certainty,
Which, finding not, they come to rest.

"Are they as new to life as I?
—Like me afever with its flame?
Or do they fear its charm and zest
May vanish whence and as they came?

"To move! What joy! To follow far
From what is new to newer still!
Can such a range of choice and change
Accrue to me?—Await my will?

"If I be weighted to this spot
As is this stone on which I sit
I might assume myself the spume
Of tide or chance, borne here with it,

"But roving free, if that I may,
Will prove me sprung of nobler race,
—The child of some free Volant Force,
Not circumstanced by place or space.

"Of two joint worlds I seem a part—
Not matter all, nor spirit quite,
Yet kin to both,—a double growth
In which these apposites unite.

"Thus I perceive that I may be,
While yet unconscious of the fact,
Likewise a dual entity
—Two natures merged, yet each intact.

"The one seems numb or dead or dumb,
—This soil-bound rock, this listless earth:
The other moves and, moving, proves
Its finer worth, its spirit birth.

"And yet this brook its life and song
From its opposing banks receives:
Their very deadness dam and spur
To fuller life the thing that lives.

"Are these unspirit things but foils
Or dykes to give my spirit bent?
—But quarries whence the mind may fetch
New wealth of truth, and nourishment?

"To move! The thought itself gives wings,
Inspires the will to mastery

Of all that place or far-flung space
May hide or hold of liberty.

* * * * * * *

"These hands again! Why now inert?
Have they through labor found some joy,
—Some amplitude of greater good
Which further searching might destroy?

"Aha! again they move abroad,
Yet now because I willed it so,
And though the wish was scarcely born
My instant will they know and do.

"What prompts them thus to what I would?
I having uttered no command:
This mystery—each mystery,
Another breeds on every hand.

"If set on purpose of their own
What warped them to my foreign will?
Or would they claim that serving mine
Proves theirs the greater wit and skill?

"From such adductions it might seem
That serving unto honor leads,
And that a scepter waits the hand
That makes its own another's needs.

"Perchance some other truth is writ
Upon their palms and fingers ten,
—Some fact so deep that only shape
Or deed can make its meaning plain.

"For in their way they say to me,
While making of my wish commands,
'You must in turn yourself discern
The arms of some Great Will, and hands.'

"And this recalls that in my dream,
Ere yet it formed a concept clear,
Through every quick'ning nerve I felt
That some Great Presence hovered near.

"Some One beyond my utmost reach,
And yet too near to sense aright,
Whose glory touched my torch aflame
Before it melted into light.

"Some One whose will gave birth to mine
Just as these hands do mine receive,
Who called to me, almightily,
'Awake! Come forth! Awake and live.'

* * * * * * *

"How sweet and free this pulsing glee
At sight and sense of all around!
Are these for me, or I for them?
Is that my sky? Is this my ground?

"But where is He so lately here,
So scarcely gone before the morn?
Or is He still at hand concealed
Within each gladness to me borne?

"Yes, where is He? for I would know
From whence I am and why am here,

—For expectation of some guest
With fragrance lades the very air.

"Sprang I from naught, to nothing doomed,
—An evanescent idolon?
Then why this fevered ecstasy,
—This hope of living on and on?

"If I but span a space of time
Now here, now hence, ephemeral,
How could I even apprehend
A life that has no terminal?

"Beyond my knowing seems to brood
Some reason why I shall exist,
—The pledge that if my grasp should fail
I will not vanish like yon mist.

"And being conscious that I am,
Who am but yet some moments old,
Will not each lapsing hour increase
This tenure I now vaguely hold?

"Until some stronger force oppose
Shall not life's current flow amain?
And, with each reason why it should,
An added width and depth attain?

"But now I live! Stupendous fact!
—Yet less of import than to know
If while the mind has sustenance
It will not cease or cease to grow.

"Perhaps this endless endlessness
Of forms and things in such array
Is but a hoard wherein is stored
Its food for an eternity.

"Or have I happened here to find
The banquet hall of some great One
Where, from a dateless past, he spread
A table where we may commune?

"For out of ev'ry shape and hue
And every use and quality
My mind distils a cup that fills
Me with a new vitality.

"From all these things and all implied
My reason hastens to affirm
That neither space nor time can place
On life a boundary or term."

* * * * * * *

And down a vine-clad vista
O'er which the dew clouds lay
She sat and gazed, enraptured,
Till lost in reverie.

Before her hung an iris
Which arched from hill to hill,
Its beauty all enfocused
On something fairer still.

Like some responsive spirit
It seemed to flash reply
To her suspended questions
Through an all-seeing eye,

And formed a cloud-wrought symbol
That spanned all things below,
—Herself the focal emblem
Round which it seemed to grow.

And thought with thought was blended
Until unconsciously
She and God's bow of promise
Exchanged identity

—Till of the glorious archway
She dreamed herself the key,
Upheld by what it symboled,
Its symboled substance she.

For of the long adventures
Which all the ages hold,
Here was the victor's guerdon,
Her heart and soul its mold.

And here the moat and fortress
Which evil must subdue
Or wage a hopeless battle
With all that God holds true:

And here the earth-built fountain,
But channel of God's grace,
Whence Love and Life might issue
For all of Adam's race.

This knew the guileful Serpent
As from some vantage seat
He watched and weighed with choler
God's answer to his hate.

So here was joined the warfare
Between all good and ill;
The war 'twixt Love and Hatred
Was on, and rages still.

* * * * * * *

"In every nook, on every hand
The world with wonderments is rife,
The greatest of them all to me
This constant present rhythm of life.

"Each pulsing moment leads a next
As though from an exhaustless store,
And like the wavelets of this brook
Leaves me born new upon the shore.

"Leaves me impassive, yet enriched
By each with all the wealth it bore,
—Its gift made richer by its pledge
To come again with more and more.

"And though but moments old I feel,
—And though I cease as many hence,
The tenure that I hold holds me
Wrapped in its own continuance.

"Yes, now I live, o'ermast'ring thought,
Yet less outbounding than to feel
That in my grasp I meet a clasp
That will not break though mine should fail.

* * * * * * *

"These flying things! They sing their joy;
Ah! who would not if they could fly?

From tree to tree they float at will,
—Shall powers like these belong to me?

"Or are these feet my only mode
If hence or thence I wish to go?
And why but two? and which one first?
And why these toes all forward so?

"But why this eager questioning
While what I see is much too much?
Will adding more to what runs o'er
My cup enlarge? or break my clutch?

"Yet how can I restrain my quest
E'en though I forfeit all its gains?
Perhaps joy's font is infinite,
The more 'tis drained the more contains.

* * * * * * *

"But hark! those notes that find my ear!
—Words like my own they seem to be,
Or are they echoes of my hopes
Returned from utter vacancy?

"Or if I speak will they reply?
Will some one come if I invite?
—As do these birds which at my words
Come flutt'ring down, without afright?

"Ah see! The trees seem filled with them,
And coveys come from far and near.
Are you the answer to my thought?
Do each of you some message bear?

"And ye are all with feathers clad,
While I these flowing tresses wear:
Your garb is passing beautiful,
But mine is more,—beyond compare.

"With lilting grace you flit about,
Excelling me in many things,
Yet if I may not have them both
I'd rather have these hands than wings.

"—These hands than wings like yours I mean,
But I may boast another kind,
The pinions of a wingless flight
—For realms traversed alone by mind.

"Am I to you as comely quite
As you to me, that ye are drawn?
Or do you make of me a shrine?
—As I might make of yonder dawn?

"Or are you angels in disguise?
To illustrate the magic pow'r
That beauty wields when fitly worn,
—At once a covering and dower?

"And do you chance to come from Him
Who only lately went His way?
—The bearers of some mystic truth
Which only words will not convey?

"What tongue is that in which you speak?
You blankly stare, and answer not.
Do diff'ring dialects deny
Communion in a common thought?

"Perchance you only think in things
And therefore miss these melodies
Which float to me from hidden harps
In ceaseless silent rhapsodies.

"Or do you hail from Beauty's school,
At His behest, to train my soul
In precepts foreign to all words?
—To know and feel the beautiful.

"Or was this world of Beauty born
Its Parent's glory to reveal?
—While He Himself remains unseen
In all I see and hear or feel.

* * * * * * *

"But there! Once more I hear that voice.
Can it be His? or are there two?
And why does it awake in me
What other voices do not do?

"Shall I make bold with a reply?
And if I may what shall I say?
What word expresses what I would,
Yet less or more will not convey?

"Can I take counsel of these trees,
Or of these flowers make request?
Can they assess the gladsomeness
Those tones have kindled in my breast?

"What word condenses what I feel
Or half my meaning can transmit?
And does there wait somewhere an ear
That can translate and answer it?

"And yet those words seem shadowlings
—But syllables of commonplace
Adventured forth fatuitous
On chancing winds or vacant space.

"What unseen zephyrs winged them hence
Or charged them with the mystic power
To light this flame of nameless name
In tinder not found there before?

"Or do I have a further sense
Than these that touch and hear and see,
—A sense that seeks companionship
And matehood in some other me?

"—A sense that gathers from all things
The meanings that exist beneath
—A sense with eyes through which it spies
A world born new with every breath.

* * * * * * *

"Again it calls, and is it His
Whose lips breathed into mine my soul?
Or comes it from some such as I,
Whose thirst, like mine, brooks no control?

"—He touched my ears, and lo I hear,—
My eyelids raised, and thus I see.
My lips He parted and I speak—
How passing great such One must be!

"Ah! What a pleasant world this is.
But would that He who formed my heart
Might come again and let these lips
Return His love,—at least in part.

"But whence that word,—that mystic word?
What intuition at a bound
The concept coined and moved my tongue
To mold that miracle of sound?

"It names for me that inner world
Whose sweet delight to this one drips
Unconsciously, like this that fell
The now from my unguided lips.

"If so, oh that some guiding hand
Might pilot me within its gate.
Perchance the source of yonder voice
Will prove at once both guide and mate.

* * * * * * *

"In likeness what must such one be,
In manner, color, or in shape:
A fowl? or reptile? or a beast
That climbs and chatters like yon ape?

"Mayhap I question futilely,
But something tells me none of these
Can answer to my soul's desire,
—Its homage hold, its thirst appease.

"Or will He prove some wond'rous one
The sum of grace and dignity,
—Some one whose worth my worship earns,
—Whose honoring but honors me?

"At this I smile, yet smiling feel
An answering sense, a pulsing glee

That doubles all the joy I felt
Before this concept came to me.

* * * * * * *

"But are these castles that I rear
Of notions built, to nothings bent?
Can fancy out of nothing frame
The world I mold, such joys invent?

"Or is there back of this my mind
Unseen a greater wiser One
Who predevises what I would
And seeks expression through my own?

"And is His pleasure but fulfilled
When from these coarser finite reals
My spirit at volition builds
Its finer, infinite ideals?

"And is it but one guerdon more
That I from passing trifles gain
The power to conjure palaces
Which may eternally remain?

"Can hopes like these false counsel give,
Or has this image in the brook
In smiling its reply to me
Mine for yon other's face mistook?

* * * * * * *

"How beautiful that image is;
—Till now ignored, but now so fair,
—Does what yon voice betrays to me
This added comeliness inspire?

"Or does such hope that mates its kind
Bring forth a grace more passing fair?
Perhaps yon miracle of sound
But names the child of such a pair."

* * * * * * *

And now all questions are forgot
Save that which glimmers through the haze
From out the stream's mysterious depths
And thralls her fascinated gaze.

To her the pool becomes a sea
Of unplumbed depth, without a shore,
From which ten thousand shapes arise,
Each fairer than the ones before.

They come, they go, they reappear
On pinions gilt with flameless fire,
Until her soul they dream away
To realms of ultimate desire.

And was it fact or fantasy,
—That glamour,—that elusive gleam
That played about, above, within
That dancing phantasm in the stream?

Or some divine telepathy
That drew two souls subconsciously
Within each other's mystic sway,
Like planets at the syzygy?

Or but a tryst, and not the last,
To which unwittingly were led

From two unknowns of time and place
Two spirits for each other made?

In Eden's morning innocence
There was a mirror yet unbroke—
So void of smirch that from its depths
The soul a consort might invoke.

A mystic mirror deep and clear
Where face to face the soul might view
With vision pure, in miniature
God's choicest work—His image true.

What deeps of soul! What sweep of mind!
What vistas for their free deploy!
What depths and height of pure delight
And measureless ecstatic joy!

For in that lucid morning air
No mote or mist or rime or ruth
Could mar the symphony which played
'Twixt spirits tuned alone to truth.

And in its vibrant atmosphere
No note of dissonance could warp
Love's universal harmony
Nor falsify its heav'n-strung Harp.

For sin had not as yet befouled
The face of Virtue to deceive,
And shame had not invented sham
To gild its guilt with make-believe.

And there a wordless signless way
From soul to soul lay straight and broad
On which all joys with all were joined—
'Twixt spirits and 'twixt them and God.

And when the cycles of the years
Bring forth a new-made universe,
—When sin and pain no longer reign
For lack of objects they can curse;

When Death has claimed all that can die
And has in turn itself been slain,
That Harp, that symphony, once more
Will raise an even sweeter strain.

And in yon mirror souls will see
New graces gained in their rebirth
—Themselves the love-born harmony
Of God's great recreated earth.

Part 3

THE TRYST

In bridal veil, opaque to all
That evil would, or might have thought,
Translucent to the pure alone,
By heaven designed, by seraphs wrought,

From silken tresses rippling down,
And dawnlight meshed with morning mist,
The bride-to-be went forth to keep
Unwitting tryst with one unwist.

Above her alabastine brow
The seeming of a halo hung
That cast a sheen o'er Beauty's Queen
Which to her sex has ever clung.

Upon her face there lay no trace
Of griefs that came in after years,
No portent of the scars which sin
To furrows turned for flowing tears.

Hard by her way the Tempter lay
As he has lain by every road,
From then till now, by every path
Where innocence has fared abroad.

But 'round her rose and with her moved
Invisible a citadel,

With guarding moat as deep and wide
As is the gulf 'twixt heaven and hell.

For round her soul her guilelessness
Built high invincible defense;—
God's watchers wield no cov'ring shield
So potently as innocence.

And from her eyes a spirit shone
Too pure to even see her foe,
—So much alert to things aloft
She saw nor sensed what lurked below.

If Purity could have a font
Its self emitting ceaselessly—
If Goodness an enteleche
Its self recausing endlessly;

—If from within a soul might build
Its body like a palace fit,
—If Virtue sculpturing at the heart
Might grave a face that mirrored it,

Methinks that she whose form we see
Both Font and Palace might express,
—A silhouette of what might well
Interpret God in loveliness.

* * * * * * *

Beyond a fell of tropic ferns
Whose fronds dipped low, as in salute,
—Beyond a coppice where the vines
Hung laden low with purpling fruit

A grove of stately trees upreared
Their serried trunks, and screened the sky
With vaulting branches interlaced
In one great pillared canopy.

Far vistas were in dimness lost,
As when the gloaming waits the day,
And hushed in holy stillness vast
God's great primeval Temple lay.

With littered leaves and trailing flowers
The spacious nave was thickly strewed,
And aisles converging from afar
Met where an altar might have stood.

And on such carpets mottled deep
The glintings from some filt'ring rays
Wrought golden shadows on the paths
Of two who came from diff'ring ways.

The one, God's noblest work, was crowned
With honor and with dignity,
Who trod with regal mein an earth
Whose farthest limits owned his sway.

The other, cast in finer mold,
Ensembled all that inward grace
May visualize in outward build
Or carriage, color, form or face.

And on her brow a coronet
Unseen, the token of that sway
That rules in realms where Force finds naught
That owns its coarser potency.

The glory of the one was strength,
—Not moral less than physical,
That sovereignty might have the right
To make its love imperial.

The other bore that diadem
That rules supreme by giving way,
And through submission gains the throne,
—The paradox of Calvary.

Without a care, immune to fear,
—As light of foot as roe or fawn,
—As soft of gaze as yon gazelle,
—As graceful as yon swimming swan,

—Unconscious of all cynosure
She loitered in her glad advance
To trip a measure to the rhythm
That ruled the shim'ring shadow dance.

And every step some new delight
But chased a fairer just beyond,
Until her fleet and flying feet
In their pursuit scarce touched the ground.

And like the undulating waves
That stir the bosom of the ocean
A rhythmic gladness made of hers
A pulsing deep of pure emotion,

The while the rapture pent within,
Unhampered by the art of words,
Intoned the gladness of her soul
In chansons stolen from the birds:—

Till, glancing up, two visions met
Each other, dazed with like surprise,
While questionings too deep for words
Met deeper questions for replies:

—Ten thousand questions merged in one,
Whose answer palsied thought and speech,
Until a light that God let fall
On each, for each replied to each.

And in the silence that ensued
An Unseen Spirit seemed to place
An unseen circle 'round them twain
That drew their spirits face to face.

Part 4

THE MEETING

ADAM.—"Do I see a dream,
Or dream I see
What can only seem
So fair to be?
—Like the gems agleam
In morning dew;
Or is this my dream
Now falling true?
—Or fallen true?"

EVE.—"If my presence here
Sheds such delight,
May I claim my share
—By common right?
And your questions seem
Quite fit for two,
For I've dreamed a dream,
As dreamed have you,
—Which falls as true.

ADAM.—"If the joy I feel
Were cleft in two,
And if I might deal
Its half to you,
Then the rest would more
Than double be
Of the whole before

I met with thee,
Or shared with thee."

Eve.—"Then I thus perceive,
If this be true,
Should I likewise give
Half mine to you,
We would each give more,
Yet more retain,
Than we had before
Between us twain.
Let's swap again."

* * * * * * *

Until now too straught to bend to mirth,
In a laugh they joined, the first on earth.
First the one, then both, then both again
To their new-found pleasure lost the rein.

And as fledgelings tremble with delight
When they first find wing aloft in flight,
Or as eaglets from their eyries blown
Make the spirit of the storm their own,
They from fancy fled to fancies new
As emotion led or drove or drew,
Till Companionship of nothings wove
From their filaments the web of love.

And as answering shout to shout accords
They at length abandon use of words,
And with eyes enmist with pleasure tears
Each a rainbow o'er the other rears;—
Each a bow that arched that spot on earth
Where the miracle of love had birth.

Neither they nor those who since have had
Such communion knew why they were glad,
Yet they found as millions since have done
That when Love survenes on Reason's throne
All the laws that hold the mind in fee
For the nonce become a nullity,—
For that some of heaven's toxic air
Has o'erflowed to earth and settled there:
—And that Love and Gladness are forever
Wed with bonds which none may ever sever.

In an honest laugh, unmarred by art,
Hear the native lingo of the heart;
And in smiles that haunt an infant's eyes
Read the dialects of Paradise.
What is said or done a loan may be
To be paid again with usury,
But a laugh or smile spends all its all,
Like to incense burned beyond recall.

And as blossoms are but prophecies
Of the worth that later lades their trees,
Or as bubbles blown upon the air
May the vision lure to worlds afar,
Or as kites adventured to the skies
May return to tell God's mysteries,
So may pleasure's idle vagaries
Guide to heaven's eternal verities:
And the flippancies of wit be seers
Of the reasoned truths of riper years.
For by sense of humor God designed
To divide the brute from human kind.

At a whim some such again they laughed
While their dripping pleasure cup they quaffed
And the echoes, bounding back from far,
With their vibrant cadence cleft the air,
Setting wide agape the gates of bliss
For their sinless world, and also this.

And the nesting songsters 'mong the boughs
Had their twitt'ring eased, to sense the cause.
There they learned by rote that chansonette
Which, though wordless then and wordless yet,
Is the choral lay they sing today
As they call that scene to memory.

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But, their rapture having spent its force,
They resumed the drift of their discourse.

* * * * * * *

ADAM.—"How it mazes me
That meeting thus
This amenity
Forewaited us:
And how mind with mind
Can barter hold,
And a profit find
Worth more than gold,
And, as though designed,
Bring merchandise
And from stores of kind
Weigh ready price."

EVE.—"This amazement cleaves
To me as well,

Yet a greater weaves
'Round me its spell.

"Can a mind invent
And straightway build
Of its own intent
What is not willed?
Though your words express
Their meaning clear
What you say is less
Than what I hear,
For about you wafts
A glowing light
Like those slanting shafts,
But yet more bright—
—Like a diaphane
Of mystic mist
Which my eyes make plain,
Does not exist.
And about your face
Beseems to shine
An enhaloed grace
Aventurine.

"Or, is what I see
But make-believe,
Like a phantasy
Insubstantive?

"Though I interpose
With all my will
And my eyes I close
I see it still.

"Is the sheen that plays
About us twain
But a phantom haze
To fade again?
Or does sense of near
Companionship
Clothe the light and air
With eye and lip?

"Yet this thought abrupt
I must forbear
Lest I interrupt
What I would hear."

ADAM.—" 'Tis a strange event
That we have met
As by accident;
But stranger yet
That a common thought
And common speech
And a common lot
Pertains to each.

"Can it be indeed
That selfish ends
And a common need
Ordain us friends?
For I seem to read
That Friendships rise
From the springs where need
Its thirst allays."

EVE.—"Should it thus surprise that dream-shod
feet
Should have chosen ways they knew
would meet?
Do not hopes aflame with right desire
Have the right to frame what they
require?

"Can a right intent lack right of way?
Or can Hope invent and then betray?
Yet perchance I weave with threads too
few,
Or myself deceive with half that's true."

ADAM.—"While we may admit our threads are few,
How can thoughts so fit be less than true?
How may we believe nonentities
Have the skill to weave such tapestries?

"What your fancy paints so prettily
May be some occluded verity
Which was limned within it ere it left
Its Designer's Loom, your waiting weft,

"Which your wit beyond your wot betrays.
For the truth without our will finds ways
To convey itself from mind to mind
And a welcome or unwelcome find;

"—Yet attaches worth and wings and feet
When it questions forth from lips so
sweet.

And the pleasing thoughts which you
suggest
Seem with others fraught that lend them
zest.

"While my hopes assert that we are kin,
And your eyes alert are lures to mine.
May I ask, Fair One, from whence you
came?
And an added boon would be your name."

Eve.—"While my pleasure is what pleases thee
And its measure my ability,
You should be advised without delay
That I have as yet no yesterday.

"While the morning star was still in view—
As the dawn drew near,—as fell the
dew—
I became aware that I was born,
As if timed to share the thrill of morn.

"Yes, awoke while raged a gallant fight
'Twixt the Prince of Day and that of
Night,
And if name I had it must have flown
As the shadows fled before the dawn.

"Through a mist that hung, half black,
half white,
O'er my grotto and its cataract,
Seven swiftlings came, each one bedight
In a seventh hue the others lacked.

"In a prismic circle mounting high,
And but half above the mirk revealed,
They with seven arches, ply on ply,
Built a battlement above the field.

"And with speed outvying sight or thought
From this archway an aurora sped
Into every fortress and redoubt
Where the darkness still resistance made.

"And their opalescent uniform
With such terror smote the ranks of Night
That they fled like clouds before a storm
From the steadway of my Prince of Light.

"As my chosen knights, victorious, strove
With the wights of Night and through them drove
Burnished spears of light with havoc fell
They at last took flight,—my name as well.

"For while vict'ry this or that way bent
I was so enwrapt and so engrossed
—Lest my Prince should lose in the event,
—That my mem'ry half its records lost.

"But since Dawn as my knight-errant came
I may properly preempt the name:
For the thought is lent that consorts we
Are of like descent and ministry.

* * * * * * *

"So I've no remembrance less or more
As to where or what I was before;
Whether some Aralu was my home
With a Nergal warder o'er my tomb,
Or if yon Aurora on its way
Bore me hence to you, I cannot say.

"In an instant what was blank before
Like a curtain fell, and lo, a door,
Which beseemed to open every way
Like a blackness breaking into day.

"To myself I seemed, while of the night,
On the instant turned to noon-day light;
For before I woke I must have been,
Since I seemed to waken from within
In response to some o'ermast'ring power
Which commanded me to burst the door.

* * * * * * *

"As I thus was conjured from my sleep
Lo a voice seemed calling from the deep,
—And but that I paused to view yon strife
And to taste the thrilling fact of life,
It I followed here with blank intent,
Nor with meaning clear of this event:
But my steps me led as lead they might
With no other guide than pure delight.

"But if I may ask it I would know,
—That my story may the smoother flow,—
Was yon hand which dealt my life to me
—Which I feel I felt, but could not see,

—Which yon curtain drew, its darkness
burst,
And that thrilled me with life's toxic
thirst,
—Which these lips unlocked that question
you—
—Which these eyelids raised as it
withdrew,—
—Was it thine or not? or be there three
In this deep'ning plot and mystery?"

* * * * * * *

ADAM.—"What you say I add to what I knew
And it makes me glad that from the two
I can frame the answer you request,
—While this mossy mound supplies a
rest.

"It was not my hand that yonder broke
The eternal sleep from which you woke.
Nor was mine the torch that lit the fire
Or supernal light and fond desire
That is shining from your comely face
And illuming all this pleasant place,
But the hand of Him who fashioned me,
The Creator Great of all we see,
The Almighty One whose love we share
And whose spirit-form we jointly bear.

"But the voice you heard was mine alone.
'Twas a prayer in word, at heart a groan.
For this Garden good and matchless fair
With its fruits and flowers everywhere—

With its sweeping rivers, sands of gold,
With its jeweled ledges fold on fold,
Was devoid of that which adds all worth
To the things upon or in the earth;
For without Companionship to share
All my heritage was sere and bare.
So, although and if devoid of dower,
You have brought the sum of wealth twice
o'er.

"I had dreamed such face by day and
night,
And had limned each grace in every light;
But my dreams though fain were futile all
And my visions vain because so small;
Yet my dreams though false, as now I
see,
And although they libeled you to me,
They beguiled me as with bogus gold
To a hope now filled a thousandfold.

"And in this my dreams but symbolize
How His gifts loom ever in disguise
In my path to tempt me with the small
To the store where He awaits with all.
Thus I've come to know that in a less
He is wont to coil the ampleness
Of a gift so tow'ring in its size
That I ne'er might grasp it otherwise.

"And I've learned the lesson now once
more
That the more I trust Him and adore

All the more His love outruns my prayer
With the boon I crave and waits me there.
Since the sun has risen in my heart
I may bid these rush-light dreams depart;
For your story in the telling seems
To displace my bright with brighter dreams."

Eve.—"Should I now presume to think of you,
And perforce assume your reasoning true,
Then it follows like the light the sun
That a double drama draws to one.

"You have dreamed, you say, and dreaming lost,
But your dreaming now seems but the cost
Of a casket fair enough and fit
For some jewel rare awaiting it.

"Lest in flouting this your estimate
I but doom my own to share its fate,
I will make a mirror of your eyes
And appraise myself by your assize.

"You are pleased to praise my comeliness,
And I dare not hope the sum is less,
For assessing worth wherever shown
By the scales in which we weigh our own,
And appreciating what we see,
Is the half of life, it seems to me;
And the other half in balance fair
Is in being prized for what we are.

"And I see in this how one and one
If they stand aloof, each one alone,
By degrees might shrink away to naught
In their own and in all other thought;
So in praising thus my comeliness
You but prove your own as none the less;
For the more of honor each may give
All the more in turn each can receive;
And, since honor is of mutual growth,
All the gain of one accrues to both.

"So in handing back what you bestowed
I but strew with joy our common road.
But before I join my narrative
Will you not inform me where you live?
May I turn your question half way round,
As to name and place, and whither
bound?
Or your story tell, as runs your choice,
For 'tis music just to hear your voice."

ADAM.—"While my pleasure is what pleases you
And its measure is what I can do,
Let us cull the best the moment brings
And to leisure leave all lesser things.

"Hear those happy songsters in that tree,
Every note a lissome melody;
Every passing moment and its glee
To the next bequeaths more ecstasy;
And withal observe that each alone
Seems the half of two, not all of one.
And that half the joy and all the zest

Is the comradeship that plans each nest.
Thus they mean, methinks, to intimate
That their watchers might them imitate.

"When the sun goes down and night has
come
All the world will shrink within that
home,
And, in shrinking, make each moss-made
purse
The inclosure of a universe

"Shall we find a nook as they have found?
But with rocks for walls uprising round,
—Where the fragrant turf awaits our
feet
And where overarching branches meet
In a canopy, to sift the dew
From the starlight, as it filters through?

"Shall we search for such a spot and rear
What in miniature our mentors there
Have provided for the days to come—
A Paladium of joy, a home?

"And if thus you will it seems most fit
That a pledge be laid betokening it.
Shall we then this purple cluster take
And a cov'nant in its juices make?

"As its blood I press a ruddy stream
To the chalice of your willing palm
Shall it signify the warmth that pours

From my heart a living tide to yours?
Shall this nectar by its sweet appeal
Be the symbol of our bond—and seal?

"For I think with you our wisting feet
Have inclined our paths that they should meet;
And on meeting feel, and feeling know
That the Hand that made us planned it so.

"Will you place your hand in that which grasped
At your dream-born phantom as it passed,
As a sign that evermore your life
Shall be clasped in mine, my heaven-sent wife?
Will you give your pledge as I give mine
And for answer touch my lips with thine?

"For this scarlet scar athwart my breast
There's a balm in thine if to it pressed,
For I can but feel that you are lent
Both to hide and heal my discontent.
Shall we kneel as one where late alone
I an altar made of yonder stone
And a benediction there invoke
From the Unseen Hand of which you spoke?"

* * * * * * *

As entranced she hearkened to that hymn
Which has swept the lute strings of all time;

—Heard the echoes sweet if faint and
low,
Of that symphony those spirits know
Who forever in yon courts above
With abandon bask in perfect love.

Though that pristine passion of the race
Has been driven from its holy place,—
Though concupicent with sin and
shame
Since the day it fled the sword of flame,—
—Though suspicion with its doubts
attaints
E'en the honest blush that Virtue
paints,—
—Though as if ashamed it courts the
night
Like those flowers that shrink away from
light,
Yet it still survives like some lost chord
Of a symphony yet unrestored.
And it hearkens back and mourns the day
When its sanctity was sinned away.

But the charm o'erbrimmed her holy cup
As a flood exceeds a single sup,—
—Left her flaming cheek and eye ablaze
To the candor of his hungry gaze,—
—Left her trembling soul its way to find
Through a joy so bright it made her
blind.
And her heart recoiling from the bliss
Led her lips to coin a ruse like this:—

* * * * * * *

Eve.—"Since the lieu is less than I might choose
All the pleas you press I now refuse;
For you ask for more than I may give
From my little store and yet survive.

"Then you ask as boons some items three,
For the meager ones you proffer me!
Yet with pious mein you seemingly
Would assume your gain no robbery.

"Do your greater might and greater age
Give to you the right of sabotage?
Or can I expect when thus bereft
To retain respect for all then left?

"Is it meet withal to grant your claim
To the things which win me your esteem?
Is it wise or fair to ask from me
What may leave me bare of charm for thee?

" 'Tis in kindness then that I refuse
An exchange so lean that both may lose.
When you bring the price that you should pay
I may change my choice,—some other day."

* * * * * * *

And as if to cover her pretence
With a mask of leaguered impotence,
And as though to foil his threatened might
She must needs betake herself to flight,

With a naïve alacrity she leapt
From his reach apart and, pausing, wept.

Yet the tears she shed from seeming grief
Were but overflowing joy's relief,
And, designed or not, her impulse won
To the Altar Stone she feigned to shun.

Was there there or near some Hand
Divine
Her emotive movements to incline
To the sacrosanct that God there placed
As a refuge from the storm she faced?

Thus she toyed with things that mattered
naught
While her heart its furious battle fought,
And with outward circumstances played
While the ponderment of life she weighed.

Oft the storm-stressed mariner discerns
When the tempest on itself returns
That the whirlwind's heart a haven forms
From the balanced strifes of twisting
storms.

Thus her soul in storm-bound silence
moved
While she whispered it, "I'm loved, I'm
loved,"
And her fictions their enchantments wove
O'er the scene where love first fenced
with love.

From the labored mine of hardest flint
There are brought the gems of rarest glint;
—And if pearls were common as the sand
They would lack the lure they now command.
Or if sapphires studded every stone,
Who would seek to set them in a crown?
—If the gold were light as is the dust
'Twould a victim be of every gust,
So its weight, the warder of its worth,
Sinks it deep to hiding in the earth.

But were these things true in yonder world
While rebellion's flag was yet unfurled?
Was the measure of all values set
By their metered cost in toil and sweat?
Or was not the curse that smote the earth
But a sin-false estimate of worth?
Be it thus or not, we value most
What is won or bought at greatest cost.
E'en the Son of God by sacrifice
Gained the prize He sought at its full price—
—Won His matchless crown through pain and strife
And His priceless kingdom with His life.

All the heat and stress of high pursuit
Add but sweeter sweetness to the fruit.
In the endless race the planets run,
In the ceaseless speeding of the sun,

In the restless surging of the tide,
And a hundred things like these beside,
Read the teaching of the universe
That in toil itself there is no curse.
It is when our empty bubbles burst
That the toil that chased them seems accurst.
'Tis the futile chase that stings our feet
With the thorns and nettles of defeat.

* * * * * * *

But we left the twain in vergent mood
While they each the other half construed,—
Having not as yet acquired the art
Of assessing each the other's part,
Or of weighing on the selfsame beam
Whether bought or sold, with weights the same.

Though that each was swayed by fond desire,
'Twas a feeling rather to acquire,
—All ignoring in their innocence
The compellant law of recompense.
For exchange without equivalent
Makes possession but a fictionment;
And enfeoffment with no equal fee
Wins a title lacking warranty.

All the planets with precision ply
Their appointed tasks eternally,
And the universe its shuttle twines

Through an endless weft of fixed designs,
—All its forces balanced to events
Through this statute of equivalents.
'Tis a law that holds throughout all space
Save the sacred realm of Sov'reign Grace.

There, with Him, whose store forever grows
With each gift that from His coffer flows,
—And whose passion for recipients
Makes a womb of all the continents,
Whose creative love no law restrains
While an unfilled void or need remains,
—Who creates a world of hungry need
For the joy of blessing it with bread,—
There exists no right more self-supreme
Than the right to give, relieve, redeem;
—No puissance more divinely high
Than the right of sovereign charity,
—Nor a majesty that ranks above
The bestowal of requiteless love.

* * * * * * *

Though he scarce her sudden movement sensed
And as scarce from instant chase refrained,
His discretion held him where he stood
Till her further acts her words explained.

Then those Peris who outwing our wills
To decide, revise, or to restrain,

In the stillness which the while ensued
Held a wordless parley 'twixt the twain:—

Held a parliament of reticence
Which perhaps the birds and flowers joined—
For they still supply when hearts are dumb
The appeal for which no words are coined.

* * * * * * *

"Shall I go or stay?" at length he mused,
As her mood he failed to analyze,—
"If I go, then where? Where find the price
Of such priceless brand of merchandise?
What is this which builds a citadel
From the fragrance of its own pure breath,
And surmounts it with artillery
That outranges life and even death?
Do I find myself a thrall bound fast
With the shackles of a prisoner,
And from sovereign choice my captive soul
Bound with fetters forged from gossamer?
Shall I go or stay?" at length he called,
As he caught a question in her eyes;
"Does the world contain what you demand
As the price of wifehood's sacrifice?"

And with downcast face he slowly cast
The exhausted cluster on the moss,
For its emptiness now seemed to say
That his golden dream had turned to
dross.

As a blazonry of citrine light
Wrought a shim'ring halo of her hair;
And transfused her tears to twinkling
gems,
She appeared the peer of all that's fair.

And a shapely hand which hither till
Had not touched or been of touch aware
In its groping now unconsciously
Found the Altar Stone, and rested there.

But its very stillness seemed to call
From beyond the space that lay between
To the king within him, for it bore
The imperial mandate of a queen.

What a little thing, that shapely hand,
As it waited on the Altar's crest!
But how great the kingdom that it rules!
How imperative in its behest!

From the selfsame fountain rise and flow
To the selfsame surfless sea above
By the selfsame channels,—God or-
dained,
Both the tide of Life and that of Love.

And the voyager whose barque is borne
By the one is carried by the other,
And the chart and pilot of them both
Are the hand and heart that make the
mother.

* * * * * * *

Eve.—"What you seek may not be found abroad
Nor acquired from any mine or mart,
And it has no valence till exchanged
For its like in kind and counterpart.

"What unbars the chaliced paranath
Of the lily at the sun's behest?
Or unlocks the sanctum of the rose
To the wooing winds at their request?

"Go inquire what lures the lark aloft
In the choral morn with votive prayer
And which seems itself to rise the while
On the worship of its worshiper.

"Go inquire what fills yon votary
With aversion for its native heath,—
What mysterious nimbic of the dawn
Smites it deaf and dumb to all beneath.

"May I teach you where to find the grail?
That exhausted cluster will suffice,
For 'tis found alone where self expires
On the altar of its sacrifice.

"You have summed the things which you
would give,
And have offered all except the whole.

Yet you ask for more than love may sell
In exchange for less than its own soul.

"It is not Desire,—for such will fail
When it meets with others more supreme,
Nor of passion born, for passions pass
Like the froth afloat upon a stream.

"At the moment of our meeting there
I was dreaming of yon fantasy
In the glassy pool and from the part
I was painting what the whole might be;

"But there seemed to flit beyond my grasp
An uncertain searching discontent,
Like the spirit of a spirit lost
In its quest for fit embodiment.

"Then I saw your form,—yet saw beyond,
And my soul awoke as from a trance
To a vision of a world so fair
That the sunlight smirched its radiance.

"—Saw a world within a world within
Having neither length nor width nor wall—
Which had neither height nor depth and yet
Held dominion in and over all:

"Saw a mystic garden so abloom
That its beauty seemed to sing aloud,

And from censers pendant from each
flower
Saw an incense rising like a cloud;

"—Saw the seeming of a placid stream,
Like a brimming river winding by,
In whose rainbow depths was mirrored
deep
All the seeming of a nether sky;

"—Saw among its glowing phantasies
As it were two keepers of the whole,
The ensemblance they, of all its grace,
It their domicile, and they its soul.

"—Saw them lave at will in limpid fonts,
—Pluck their toxic fruits from tree and
vine,
And with endless art each moment mold
To some future joy yet more divine.

"—Saw them strive to conquer each its
mate,
Or of each to make the others prey
By a warfare waged with arrows winged
With the worship of its enemy.

"Saw their radiant bodies all suffused
As with phosphorescent blush and glow
From the warmth and rapture of their
joy,
Or some light within which filtered
through.

"Like two opposites yet apposites,
Or two striving storms, till both outdone
They enfolded each the other's form
And the twain were wedded into one."

* * * * * * *

While her fancy thus the picture drew
There was woven round his heart anew
That mysterious net which Heaven forms
From the tendrils of a maiden's arms.

Then they knelt beside the Altar Stone,
Where their dreams, like they, were merged in one;
For the vision that their love had seen
Made of him her king, of her his queen.

* * * * * * *

Oh, the noblest honor men may claim
Is the crown such love bestows on them,
And the greatest in a woman's life
Is the kiss that makes a maid a wife,—
—Save that kindred honor both may claim
At the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.
He who guards with care such earthly crown
Is presumptive heir to yonder one,
But who drags its whiteness in the dust
Deeds his soul to moths, his heart to rust.

* * * * * * *

Only He who made it knows the deeps
Of the soul, or that which in it sleeps;

Only he who tuned it to His own
Knows the harp He made, its sweetest
tone;
Only He can, therefore, sound or measure
Its capacity for joy and pleasure.
It was love of love and being loved
That to form it God by love was moved,
And for neither is there treasure trove
Like the power to wake and answer Love.

* * * * * * *

From his tree near by the Tempter hung,
The observer keen of all that passed,
And, ascintillate with jealous hate
He abode his time;—which came at last.

Through his glittering scales of orange
green
All the colors of the iris shone,
And an angel of the light he seemed
Till his deadly work was doubly done.

—Till his plot satanic brought the curse
And to exile drove the love-linked pair;
—But in this he failed,—in that their love
They from Eden brought,—its souvenir.

And although the sword of flame abides,
'Tis a prophet of a day to come
When the light which yonder blinded
them
Shall a beacon prove to light them home.

For the Tempter's head shall yet be
crushed
By the Heel of her that brought to birth
The ensemble of that Sov'reign Grace
Which gives Life and Light and Love to
Earth.

AUNT ROSANNA'S

January First—1906

In ye olden times when anything was done in verse it was customary to print an introduction in plain prose for the evident purpose of explaining what it was all about.

We are no poet and bring nothing worthy of the name of a poem. However, we have prepared a few rambling verses on a *subject* which is well worthy of a Lowell or a Scott. We attempt to picture the old Magee Homestead as seen through the eyes of a boy a few years after the date of the wedding whose fiftieth anniversary we here celebrate. At the date referred to my grandparents had been dead some years and my mother and her three orphaned sisters, with their only brother, "Uncle Ren," constituted the family.

We have understood that until our mother left this place for a home of her own, there never was any worth-while question as to who directed things hereabout, but upon leaving, her mantle fell upon her next younger sister. So during the days of which we write the place was called after the name of its reigning queen and leading spirit, "Aunt Rosanna's."

In those days it was our joy and custom to spend a month or two every summer visiting here, and there was scarcely a nook or cranny about the

farm or its old log buildings with which we were not familiar.

The old house stood on the spot where this new one now stands, and we remember very distinctly the shock we got here when we found that the old house had been taken down. Near the place where the present barn now stands stood a great log one in which we had many and many a time hunted eggs with Aunt Lizzie, and stoned hornet nests with our almost inseparable companions during those visits, Cousins Allison and Lorena Douthett. They are here today, and many of our days and nights as well were spent at their home just across two fields.

We offer this description to-day because it carries us back to the place where fifty years ago were solemnized the weddings we are here to commemorate, and the few years intervening between the date of those weddings and the time of which we write could not have made very much change.

So it was among such scenes that Aunts Lucinda and Tillie were wedded, and from such scenes that they went joyfully away to homes of their own.

If you've lived long enough and care to remember
The days when Aunt Rosanna reigned here—
If our pencil could paint you correctly the picture
As memory holds it in vision most clear,—
If we could but make you a barefooted urchin
And drop you right down in the midst of the joy,
We are sure you would think you were not far from
heaven—
—The sort of a heaven that's made for a boy.

It is forenoon in June and the family buggy
With Pigeon hitched in it is crossing the ridge
Of the Evansburg hill, with mother for driver,
Just ayont Fox's Ford and the Amberson Bridge.
It is four miles away, yet the boy in the buggy
Can anymost see through the tops of the trees
The moss-grown roofs of the old log buildings,
Where wonderful echoes resided those days.

At the end of the lane was a gate, you remember?
Counterbalanced with rocks on a great pivot post,
And a deep, solemn squeak it gave forth as you
turned it,
A greeting to you while forewarning your host.
Old Pigeon stops short at the gate without telling.
She's as blind as a bat but she knows it is there;
As a colt she had borne one glad day from this
gateway
Her mistress a bride,—so it's homecoming to her.

The squeak has already awakened old Lion,
And his welcoming bowwow resounds through the
trees,
For of course, he's expecting and waiting our
coming—
Just as everyone there did those halcyon days.
To the forks of the lane we hasten old Pigeon,
And here meet the question of which way to go—
Shall we first make for Douthett's—Aunt Lu-
cinda's, more proper,
Or keep to the left,—Aunt Rosanna's, you know?

Old Pigeon has mem'ries that promptly decide it,
And soon we have rounded the barn into view

Of the old log house, overlooking the garden
And the watering trough 'neath the shellbark tree.
From the vine-clad porch comes Aunt Lizzie a-racing,
With curls in the air and cheeks rosy red,
Uncle Ren at her heels, Aunt Rosanna, Aunt Susan—
Each trying to reach us a little ahead.

And lastly Abe Shontz (he of stories and jack-knives,
And willow-bark whistles, and popguns galore)—
All laughing a welcome whose sweetness outrivaled
The billows of roses abloom by the door.
Then the first thing was dinner; but you won't understand us
Unless you have sat in a split-bottomed chair
At the great cherry table that stood in the kitchen
And tasted the toothsomeness always found there.

From the pot on the crane in the great stone chimney
Great dishes of chicken were brought without stint,
And sweet cakes and tarts from the three-cornered cupboard,
And butter as yellow as gold from the mint.
And dried-apple pies! Now spare your contempt
Till you've dined on the old original brand;
—Like to puddings they were with a cinnamon flavor,
And cuts which resembled quarter-sections of land.

And lettuce and radishes right from the garden;
—Such radishes, friends, we have never since met,

And cheese that was pressed out there by the
woodshed,—
—I tell you, dear friends, our mouth waters yet.
Over there are the "hackles" and "swifts" in the
corner,
And the loom, and the reel with the wonderful
crack.
The "reeds" and the "heddles," the shuttles and
"bobbins,"
And thrums without end, red and green, white and
black.

From the wool and the flax which willing hands
gathered
Full many a web that old loom wove;
With a warp of good will and with kindness for
filling,
The weft that came forth was the product of love.
And many a longing and fond recollection
Were often, no doubt, treadled into the twill,
For the hands that had fashioned that loom from
the forest
And that first threw its shuttles were all now still.

'Twas a wonderful loom and a wonderful kitchen,
Conducted by three just as wonderful aunts,
For by them were here spun and wove *and sus-
pendered,*
Of linsy-woolsy our first pair of pants.
Over back was the springhouse—the dog churn
close by it
Which old Lion, when hungry, would mount and
run,

Unless it was locked, for thus he earned buttermilk,
And always got paid when the churning was done.

Thence the lane led away up the hill to the pasture,
And we were the cowboy when folks were all busy,
But mostly we tarried so long at the berries
That we got a ride home on the back of Aunt Lizzie.
Next the kitchen a hallway, with stairway aloft
And a nook up there where the dinner bell swung,
With its rope running down through a crack in the flooring
To the porch underneath, and by which it was rung.

Oh, how often we've waited up there till Aunt Susan
At dinnertime came to tug at the cord,
When we'd suddenly jerk up the rope, just to fool her,
—And then get spanked,—but not very hard.
From the nook we could see 'cross two fields and their fences
Where Allison lived and Lorena likewise,
And Uncle James, also,—who had gimlets and bee-hats
And worked among bees just as if they were flies.

And the parlor! But where are the words to describe it?
Its walls of hewn logs, with a knot here and there,
And the chinks mortared up, its joists of rough timbers,
All whitewashed each spring with particular care.

On the floor a rag carpet, puffed up like a bedtick
On billows of straw till it felt to the tread
As if wading a haymow, and gave forth a perfume
Like harvested clover in windrow half dried.

Over there 'gainst the wall and next to the window
Stood the tall, old clock, whose face always frowned
In dignified silence on all youthful follies,
And always ticked loudest when bedtime came 'round.
Its weights were constructed of little tin buckets
Filled with pebbles and buttons and pieces of brick;
If it didn't keep up with the sun Aunt Rosanna
Just dropped in more buttons to hasten its tick.

We knew it not then but learned of it later,
That this solemn old clock with the thoughtful face
Had looked down upon scenes and on far-reaching changes
Which here in its presence had oft taken place.
It had measured the moments for slackening pulses,
And days of despair and voiceless grief;
And again tolled the hours for sorrows, assuaging
Declaring that these, like life, are brief.

But again it had tallied the footfalls of pleasure,
—Had listened to vows again and again
That had wedded true hearts, and ticked out a blessing
On those going hence to new homes of their own.
And we've gathered today with our fondest well wishes
On the spot where the old clock ticked away

While Uncle John Sproull married our Aunt Tillie
Just fifty long years ago this day.

And beside them right there was Uncle James
Douthett,
Aunt Lucinda beside him, hand in hand,
Each confessing to each and to Pastor Galbraith
A love that naught but death could end.
The vows of that day were recorded in Heaven,
And Mr. Galbraith often joked us true
That he never had failed to make the knot solid
If folks but stood still till he got through.

And now, dear friends, we are glad that the
blessings
Invoked on your lives on your wedding day
Have all been received, and that goodness and
mercy
Have followed you constantly all the way.
Faith makes of the past a pledge for the future,
And your morning so fair, and this noonday bright,
Bespeak you a day that is perfect, and endless,
And instead of an evening, increasing light.

"THE LITTLE BRICK CHURCH"

Keep back the swift years ere they cover forever
That dear old spot, and, if you will,
Let us gather once more, while in fancy we may,
At the Little Brick Church on the side of the hill.
Come from lands far remote and from over the seas;
For the worshipers there learned a faith world-wide
Which has borne its bearers to many a clime
And scattered its seeds upon many a tide.

'Twas a trysting place for the Covenant Cause,
A rallying place of the old Blue Banner;
And the moss-grown slabs in the thicket near by
Hold the names that enlisted—a long roll of honor—
The McKinneys, the Dodds, the Douthetts and Crows,
The Forsythes and the Loves, the Sproulls and Magees,
And the dates when the sleepers received their promotion—
Take us back to those sturdy old pioneer days.

You remember the many and devious trails
Winding up to the place through the great forest trees?
And their chuck holes and ruts which sometimes upset

In the summer the wagons, in winter the sleighs?
For the people who worshiped there came not for pleasure.
Religion and roads! who so bold as to mix them?
On Sabbath 'twere wrong e'en to notice such things,
And no one was there through the week for to fix them.

And the tethering trees, where the ponies kept lent
Fifty-two times per year through two faithful discourses,
Each in view of a pew, so the owner need not
Lose the thread of the sermon through care for his horses.
You recall how the horses, in lieu of a dinner,
Of the bark of the trees would feign their repasts,
And perchance you have wondered if somewhere there's not
An Elysium waiting those patient old beasts.

Some place where their tribe, which for ten generations
Had faithfully borne under saddle and rein
O'er those wilderness trails, through snowstorms and mire,
The forebears of their owners, might gather again,
And greet with a whinny, subdued as of yore,
When on Sabbath they met 'neath the chestnut and oak.
Oh, if beast and the trees praise the Lord, there was praise
In the forest-born echoes their neighing awoke.

You recall the high pulpit. 'Twas paneled and white,
Like a large lidless box at the end of the aisle.
'Twas the only thing 'bout the place, I believe,
Ever guilty of paint or suspected of style.
From a cushionless pew ere the service began
Have you not often feared there was no preacher in it?
Later on, from within, to the desk rose the Book,
And you knew that a head would come up in a minute.

Just before it they stood, who "precented" the Psalm,
Two lines at a time; you remember the tone?
And the roll of that rhythmic inflec-shi-un,
Whose set emphasis added a thrill of its own.
For it carried one back to "the killing times"
When our forefathers sang them, by stealth in the night,
In the glens and the caverns of Scotland's hills,
With their mem'ry for books and the stars for their light.

You recall the large stoves which preempted the aisle,
Which were fueled at will by those who sat near,
Till the heat or the homily deadened all sense
Of the freezing disgust from the seats in the rear.
And how their removing each spring in itself
Was a service preparing the people of Union

To hear from the pulpit that "next Lord's Day
Has been fixed by the Session for holding communion."

You remember the Sabbath the ceiling took fire?
How Pastor Galbraith, of deliberate ways,
For a time pressed the text, and then paused between heads,
While we boys carried snowballs and pelted the blaze.
And well you remember those "sacrament times"?
The solemnity sweet, which fell like dew,
As the people were slowly and cautiously led
"Up the sides of the mount"—"to the Pizgah view."

You remember the Sabbath the dove flew in,
As if drawn by the charm of that hallowed spot?
On a door, set wide to the June wood's breath,
At the minister's left, it perched and sat.
It took no fright at the minister's voice,
So gentle, and calm, and kind was he—
Oh, many a dovelike spirit plumed
Its flight in the spell of that ministry.

Were you there when the Cov'nant was solemnly sworn,
With heads bowed down for promised grace,
And with hands upraised, all filled with awe
At a Presence which seemed to fill the place?
Were you there that glad day when the minister's son
Brought home his bride?—our "Renwick" Galbraith—

Or again, when the sorrowful tidings came
From Palestine to tell of his death?

Oh, a place more fit could nowhere be
To meet with Jehovah, or learn His will,
Than beneath the trees which He planted there
'Round the Little Brick Church on the side of the hill.
'Twas the third that was built on the fitting spot;
But the trees are gone, the ground is bare,
And nothing remains to mark the place
Save the memories sweet which wander there.

The oil-well brine has spoiled the spring
Where in summer we ate our lunch at noon,
And the blackberry bushes, and the shellbarks, too,
With all their temptations are gone, are gone!
E'en the dust of the five generations dead
To a place near the town they are moving away!
Think they might have allowed them to wait for the morn
Near the spot which on earth they deemed nearest the sky.

Come from lands far and near and from over the seas
Ye few that remain who knew "Old Union."
Oh, it won't be long till there may be held
In the one sweeter place a grand reunion.
And stay the swift years while we gather again
At the dear old place, and, if you will,
Let us worship once more, while in fancy we may,
At the Little Brick Church on the side of the hill.

THE MAINE

1898—On Anniversary of Sinking of the Maine in Havana Harbor

From the depths of the sea through the darkness broke
A mighty tongue of lurid flame,
And a voice like the voice of Jehovah woke
A callous world to Cuba's shame.
E'en the waves, as if guilty, in terror fled,
When spoke the God of freedom there,
For they held, like humanity, tears unshed,
While wails of woe filled all the air.

And they stood abashed, as when of yore
God lit a pathway through the sea
With a pillar of fire and went before
To cleave the way to liberty.
From whence that flash and that terrible bolt?
The world's best wisdom asks in vain,
But the Presence which planned his people's revolt
At the burning bush is making it plain.

The pride of a nation which could not hear
In Cuba's cry "His still small voice"
Heard His thunder-tones in the whirlwind of fire
That claimed that awful sacrifice.

And, smarting beneath the Unseen Hand,
The nation leapt from lethargy
To the task which God gave her at birth, to stand
Between the tyrant and his prey.

Write the names of the men that were claimed by death
On high upon the martyrs' scroll,
For their lives fed the light which illumined the path
Toward the nation's baptismal goal.

Long ago it was writ of our merciful God,
"He smites in love his chosen one,"
And the favor it pledges is well worth the rod
That points a nation to its crown.
And invisible armor has sheltered our ships,
Our guns were trained by an Unseen Eye,
And the tempered steel from their livid lips
Proclaimed God's will to tyranny.

Far above the intentions of nations or men,
Above their knowing or consent,
There's a purpose that sov'reigns—an ultimate plan,
To which their good and ill are bent,
That purpose means freedom the whole world 'round
—The way to pave for brotherhood,
And in the attainment of these to found
Fraternal fealty to God.

THE PENNSYLVANIA BROOKS HIGH LICENSE LAW
1895

Some five and twenty years ago
Some legislators, just elect,
Convened at Harrisburg and swore,
With hands upraised, to this effect:
"We each of us most solemnly
Do swear before Almighty God
That for this Commonwealth we'll make
Laws only for the common good";
"So help us, God."

Then presently they passed a law
Which authorizes or compels
The judge of every country court
To institute as many hells
As needed "to accommodate
The Traveling Public"; as it were,
Directs each court to privilege men
To stoke the fires—at so much per,
"So help him, God."

These legislators knew quite well
That that T. P. was but a ruse;
The real purpose was to damn
The State by law with legal booze.
So they bethought them that "hotels"

(As patronized by this T. P.)
Might be a better word than "hells"
And lend respectability,
"So help them, God."

And so they slightly changed this word
Enough to make it spell "hotel"
And make it more euphonious
And constitutional as well.
And thus we have a law, begot
Of perjury and broken faith,
By which the thousands it has damned
Drag other thousands down to death.
"So help us, God."

This "covenant with Death" should now
Be broken, don't you think?
Too long it has besmirched this State
And made our very courts to stink.
It prompts our courts to legalize
That which they know to be a crime,
And by pretense and subterfuge
To dip their ermine in the slime.
"Oh, help us, God!"

But there are courts which will not stoop
To this co-partnership with wrong,
Which take instructions from that Court
To whom all courts on earth belong;
Courts which now hold that "any law"
Which controvenes the law of God
Is by that very fact repealed
And made forever null and void
"For which, thank God."

THE RIDDLE

August 13, 1894.

Guess what occurred at our house,
The cause of all this great ado,
And turned our plans all upside down
And put us into such a reg'lar stew.

Guess what it was that made the fuss
And brought the neighbors on a run
And made them smile as if to earth
A little touch of heaven had drop't down.

Guess how it comes that counting up
The chairs that 'round the table rank,
We plan to move them up a wee
And lengthen out our board another plank.

Say how it comes on washing day
That down the chute and through the suds
Besides the common laundry stuff
Go now some other weenty dainty duds.

And how it comes that when we pray
And tell them over name by name,
One more request is added now
And for another pensioner make claim.

How comes it now when taking up
The greater toil, the seeming task,
The burden to a blessing turns
And proves itself to be in fact a mask.

Guess far and near or you may miss—
For angels, often unawares,
Bring first the answer down to us
And then await already answered prayers.

And when a-guessing don't forget
The sun shines sweetest through the rifts
Sometimes, and heaven deeds in pain
Possession of its best and purest gifts.

You may the answer partly find,
But not the riddle's full solution
Unless your fancy mounts the wheels
Of time and notes their every revolution.

And so 'tis not so wonderful
The neighbors came upon the run,
Mayhap they heard the angel's wings
That brought to us the precious bundle down.

And now they camp beside the cot
—God's guardians the readiest,
For angels ever pitch their tents
In bivouac nearest to earth's neediest.

And when you're guessing say it low,
For they may still be lurking near
To see if earth will find a name
To fit the royal little voyager.

Perhaps they wait to learn if earth
Will spare the room for heaven's blessing,
Before they fly away and leave
With us the wonder box that beat their guessing.

KRUPP OR CHRIST

1915

This may or may not be that war of wars foretold
of yore
To which all kings of earth march forth their hosts
at the behest
Of three unclean and froglike spirits, vomited from
out
The mouths of "the False Prophet" and "the
Dragon" and "the Beast."

But be it this or be it not, a feud is interwaged
Between a trinity of mortal foes, alike malign;
—Three monstrous Juggernauts,—a Statecraft
which unhonors Christ,
A false and sensual Faith, and Despotism by
"right Divine."

These three unholy spirits, or the "Kultures" they
have spawned
Upon the earth, are met to challenge each the
other's claims,
—As if before a Court of Last Resort, where Death
presides
To crown as victor that which most abets what
God condemns.

Hard by the Dardanelles, where Orient and Occident
Have often measured swords and molded racial destinies,—
Hard by the Hellespont, where meet all Creeds and Cults
And highways of the world, "the Valley of Decision" lies.

Here each is marsh'ling millions of impassioned votaries
To vindicate or validate its sovereign right to rule:
And hence this Carnival of Death, and an Inferno such
As Dante's pen could ne'er depict upon the Stygian pool.

So now or later here will come the vampires of the world,
With tooth and talon to devour each other's flesh and blood,
And in the Armageddon of all time blood-lust unrein,
Until God's earth is quit at last of all this hellish brood.

This Court regards it right to dung the earth with murdered men,
—To turn to seething holocausts their cities, homes and hearths,

—To fill all lands with mateless maids and wailing widowhood,
And stamp the costs of orphanhood on babes before their births.

It likewise holds it just to fill the seas with scuttled fleets;
—To strew the waves with bloated carcasses of beasts and men.
—To make the very clouds an ambuscade of death, and holds
That men may justly make a hell of heaven their ends to gain.

But far above all heights, beyond the reach of wrack and wrong—
Beyond the range of submarine or soaring Zeppelin—
Above the stench and putrid reek of slaughtered humanhood,—
(Yet not beyond the wails that rise from out the horrid din)

Serene sits ONE who waits while hate on hate wreaks full revenge,
And thirst for Power and Titled Pride suck up each other's blood;—
—Till bastard faiths bring forth the fruits of their own blasphemies,
And men perceive that Man has no defense from Man save God.

And while these frenzied vassals of this baneful trinity
Each other kill and crush as if in one vast slaughter-pen,
Their blinding rage unwittingly subtends the ends of Him
Whose power outbounds, while it permits the utmost wrath of men.

But why should men, with souls made in the image of their God,
Like galley slaves forever give to Force a sov'reign place?
The only hand that's fit to hold a scepter over men
Is His who paid the price and proved His right as Prince of Peace.

And thus, in final sequela, the issue does not lie
Between those nations striving now to keep yon bloody tryst,—
But 'twixt this great Triumvirate of federated hates
And Love Omnipotent that bides His hour,—'twixt "Krupp" and Christ.

THE RED CROSS SHIP

(Dedicated to my daughter Regina, upon the occasion of her sailing for France in the service of the American Red Cross, February 9, 1918.)

I dreamed I woke in Flanders,
  Behind that far-flung line,
Where walls of fire embarrage
  The gateways of the Rhine.

A crimson dawn foreboded
  Another crimson day
While men in helmets waited
  The opening of the fray.

Beyond the reeking dead-line
  Which from the Vosges runs
A hundred leagues to seaward
  Are massed two million Huns.

This side of it as many
  Have barred the Vandal's way,
At every cost and hazard
  To hold their hordes at bay.

The flower of England's yeomen
  With Gaul and Belgian stand,
With all the aids that Genius
  Can place at Death's command.

Beside them in their trenches
  Are men from every zone,
For Earth's remotest peoples
  Have made this cause their own.

And all men pause in horror
  At the Satanic sight
Of Wrong its gauntlet hurling
  Full in the face of Right.

The question here at issue,
  Brought forth at Hist'ry's birth,
Is whether Force or Justice
  Shall dominate God's earth.

'Twas asked beside the altar
  Which stood at Eden's gate,
As Abel's blood was offered
  In sacrifice to Hate.

This question, yet unanswered,
  Comes reeking down from Cain,
Across an earth made putrid
  With blood streams of the slain

And now, as though in ferment
  Outbursing through earth's crust,
The festered wrongs of Ages
  Ooze forth for vengeance just.

So here have camped those nations
  Which bear the mark of Cain,
To give to his curst spirit
  Earth's Eminent Domain.

—To keep Truth on the scaffold
While Wrong upon the throne
Brands Righteousness a fiction
And Freedom's God a clown.

And while the blood of millions
Is red'ning land and sea,
The whole world asks in horror
What shall the ending be.

Is this that bloody drama
Foretold in Holy Writ?
—The field of Armageddon,
With issue like to it?

Is there no Eye above it
That guides the wrath of men
To its own deep destruction
That Love and Truth may reign?

But lo! From o'er an ocean
Which to the sunset lies
A troop of ships is hast'ning
O'er which Old Glory flies.

And on those ships a Knighthood
Whose sword both keen and clean
Is flashing through the sunlight
Its right to intervene:

—A sword yet never lifted
Except to cleave a way
Toward the world's releasement
From tyrants and their sway;

—A sword yet never lifted
Except to deal dismay
Among the foes of Justice,
Of Right and Liberty;

—A sword whose righteous anger
God willing shall not rest
Until this hell-born "Kultur"
Has drained the cup it pressed.

And lo! above the others
A phantom ship appears
—Their Pilot Ship, whose masthead
The Red-Cross Emblem bears.

About it plays God's watch lights,
—A guard, Shekinah-like,
Through which no foes of Heaven
His messengers can strike.

For in its holy mission
Is wrapped the love of Him
Who thrones Himself in Mercy
Between the Cherubim.

And neither air nor ocean
Nor human hate can cast
A shaft against His purpose
Which does not turn at last

To break the arm that aimed it
And blast the turpitude
That dares withstand the progress
Of Human Brotherhood.

Yon ship is His own prophet
  Proclaiming to all men
That Justice, Love and Mercy
  Shall find their throne again;

And that these cruel ages
  Shall then forgotten be
Beneath that only Scepter
  That makes all nations free.

See! over it a rainbow
  That spans this deluged earth,
With pledges that its travail
  A New Age brings to birth.

And, though the black clouds hover
  Above a war-drenched race,
Yon Bow of Promise heralds
  Its coming Prince of Peace.

Sail on, oh ship seraphic,
  Your cause is Heaven's own,
And what you carry, jewels
  For His Eternal Crown.

"THE SPACIOUS FIRMAMENT ON HIGH"

Joseph Addison in his immortal lines, quoted below, stops short of a sublimity for which his thought beautifully paves the way. This material universe was not an end in itself nor is it the highest expression of the Creator's creative power. There is a greater Firmament of which this material one is but an analogy.

"The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.
The unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display,
And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty Hand.

"Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,
And nightly to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth;
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

"What though in solemn silence all
Move 'round this dark terrestrial ball?

What though no real voice nor sound
Amid their radiant orbs be found?
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
Forever singing as they shine,
'The hand that made us is divine.' "

* * * * * * *

Yet all are but the scenery,
The staging vast, and panoply
That garniture that higher field
On which there yet will be revealed
A glory greater many fold
Than singing planets ever told.
This grand arena's but the tent
For Sceptered Love's supreme event.

Those mazing orbs inscribe in flame
The letters of a royal NAME
Excelling that of Maker far
As zenith is 'bove highest star.
The story of their birth is told
And by obedience they unfold
A greater one,—which make of them
But brilliants for His diadem.

The thorn-crowned Christ here yet will prove
The matchless sweep of Regal Love,
—Controlling motives harder far
To reach, than any truant star,
—Controlling Life's mysterious light
—Elusive more than comet's flight,
—Compelling, even, by his skill
The Prince of Darkness to His will.

And when those orbs have spent their light,
Or turned to ashes in their flight,
—When they have fled to hide in shame
From that which keeps His soul aflame,
That Love that shines from Calvary
With ever-waxing brilliancy
Will bask in an allegiance leal
That blazing suns can never feel.

And He who is the "Light of Men"
—Who governs all their love to gain,
—Who scaled the Cross that Sovereign Grace
Might light its kind in every face,
Will mount His universal throne
And from it rule, by love alone,
In light which nothing can transcend
A Kingdom that shall never end.

TROTSKY

1918

Come all ye brother Bolsheviks
And wisdom hear from Comrade Trotsky,
I'll show you how to stop this row
And put all troubles in one potsky.

Those Prussians are our brethren all
And must not any more be foughtsky,
So drop your guns and tell the Huns
To help themselves to all you've gotsky.

Down with all rulers and all laws
(Except of course your Sovereign Trotsky),
Then all can freeze to what they please
No matter if it's theirs or notsky.

And if a man some rubles has
(Of course excepting your friend Trotsky)
He's certainly an enemy
To all who hain't got such a lotsky.

So he must cough those rubles up
Or else he must be quickly shotsky;
No man has got a right to what
Another wants, bygotsky.

Then ev'ry man will get a farm
And have a nice big house and lotsky.
There'll be no bums when that time comes
Nor work nor bosses nor what notsky.

My Soviets will do it all
And send the Bourgeoise where its hotsky,
For anarchy, Great ANARCHY
Is yet to take the earth for Trotsky.

"VERSAILLES"

1919

And who will compose this great Council of State
While they bind up the wounds of a crucified race?
And who will preside, and who will decide,
And who underwrite this World's Treaty of Peace?

Will the Belgæ be there in their rags soaked with
blood,
Crying out for revenge in the name of their slain?
And who will engage their hot tears to assuage,
Or an anodyne bring that will banish the pain?

And will Italy come from her countless graves,
Demanding amends for the lives she poured forth
In defending her coasts from the blood-blind hosts
Which the breed of Atilla spewed out of the North?

Will the Britons be there from the ends of the earth
With a million indictments against the Hun,
Setting forth in their brief that "a life for a life"
Alone can atone for the deeds that were done?

Will America come from beyond the wide sea
With the scroll of her Martyrs, nor plead in vain
That her heroes who fell in that German-made hell
Shall have their revenge on the helots of Cain?

And who will appear for that numberless host
Lying dumb with despair in the whirlwind's track?

The maimed and the blind, by legions consigned
To a death-in-life keener than that of the rack.

Will there come to this Conclave some angel from Heaven
On behalf of the widowed, the orphaned, or worse?
Who can wipe out the wrongs of those voiceless throngs
Of mateless maids, or cancel their curse?

Oh, where shall we turn for the solvent we seek?
And where is the wisdom that equals the hour?
Does the world hold the art that can smother the smart
Or a pledge that the spoilers shall spoil no more?

Can the Statesmen who come from the wake of the storm
Resurrect from the Civilization that fell—
—From the cinders and tears of those terrible years
A world that is safe from another such hell?

Will the Council defer to that "Counselor" great
Who alone can engage for all peoples and tongues?
Whose nail-riven palms alone hold the balms
For all wounds of the world,—that can right all its wrongs?

Will they do in His name what without it will fail?
Will they make Him a party to all that is done?
Will they grant Him his place in this Treaty of Peace
And thus anchor the weal of the world to His throne?

(From the 1919 Year Book of Geneva College, Beaver Falls, Pa.)

A TOAST TO OLD GLORY
1922

(Some lines of the first three stanzas belong to an unknown author.)

Here's to the Red of it,
And there's not a thread of it,
In all the wide spread of it,
From foot to head,
But heroes have bled for it—
Faced Steel and Lead for it
Bathing it Red.

Here's to the White of it,
And who knows the right of it
That feels not the might of it,
Through day and night?
And who wouldn't dare for it
Or offer a prayer for it
Keeping it White?

Here's to the Blue of it,
Star-spangled hue of it,
Heavenly view of it,
Constant and true.
Here's to the Whole of it,
Stars, Stripes and Pole of it,
Here's to the Soul of it,
Red, White and Blue.

But there bursts on our view of it,
An irradiance new of it—
The light of a Star,
That makes truer what's true of it,
And holy each hue of it.
In Stripe and Bar;
Till we see in each hue of it,
All its lovers hold true of it,
And more by far.

Then here's to the Gold of it,
What the Prophets foretold of it,
In symbol expressed.
How it lends to the Old of it,
New luster untold of it,
Each beauty increased
As all of the old of it
Reflects in each fold of it,
The Star of the East.

Oh, here's to the grace of it,
Baptized, in each trace of it,
To a destiny new;
While the world-wide esteem of it
'Neath the heaven-lit gleam of it,
Gives its Sovereign His due,
Let the earth and each race of it,
By the light of that grace of it,
Bring its peace dream true.

"THE BEAUTY OF PERFECTION"

1895

The rainbow is a circle,
  Could we see its full girth,
One half set in the heavens
  The other in the earth.

Some day will be completed
  The beautiful colure,
God's holy purpose mating
  With one from earth as pure.

No pot of gold is hidden
  Where seem its feet to rest,
But something far more priceless
  Earth's *ne plus ultra* quest.

The cov'nant it betokens,
  Proposed from heav'n above,
Awaits a consummation
  In earth's replying love.

Creation lacks completion,
  And Beauty full renown,
Till that full iris circle
  Links earth to heav'n in one.

A Golden Age is coming
  When Christ incarnate man

Will build the half yet hidden
Of God's eternal plan:

—A plan that underreaches
Man's fall and far descent,
And crowns, through sin's athwartment,
Supremest Love's intent:

—A plan that circum-arches
A throne-filled Mercy-seat,
And Beauty's crowning chaplet
A race irradiate.

"AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL"

1922

We quote one stanza from the beautiful hymn written by Katherine Lee Bates for the purpose of continuing the inspiring thought and theme in two others:

"Oh beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years,
Thine Alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears.
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee
And crown thy good
With Brotherhood
From sea to shining sea."

How beautiful the goal that waits
Beyond thine upward climb,
Ideals new that ever grow
Still more and more sublime.
America! America!
Thy coast may be the sea,
But no such line can e'er confine
The spirit moving thee.

Oh beautiful for visions caught
Of that supreme event,
When through thy will God rules until
The two in one are blent.
America! America!
Arise and claim the crown
That waits the race that first shall place
The Christ upon its throne.

THE END

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